Divisional Forest Officer has omitted to notice the lightness of pound fees. To this, however, he has called attention in a separate report, and proposals to raise the fines in respect of cattle trespassing in the forests of the villages that have been most to blame, have already been submitted to Government."

123. The Collector and District Magistrate of Sátára has stated: "I have no valid reasons for thinking that the forest subordinates impound cattle harshly and unnecessarily. I have found the Range Forest Officers reasonable and intelligent men; when doing jamábandi, I have made it a rule to have the Range Forest Officer of the táluká in question seated by me, and I ask the officers of each village if they have any complaint to make in forest matters, so also I ask the Ranger if he has any complaint against the village, and in this way differences are amicably settled."

3.—CIVIL SUITS.

124. No civil suit was instituted either by or against Government in any of the divisions of the Northern Circle, during the year. The two suits referred to in paragraphs 131 and 132 of last year's report, in the North Thána division, were still under adjudication and remained undecided up to the close of the year.

125. In the Poona division a sum of Rs. 293-1-0 has been recovered from Dipchand Balkisan, out of the amount of Rs. 320-5-5, referred to in paragraph 130 of last year's report.

4.—FOREST FIRES.

126. The following statement exhibits the results of fire conservancy in the several divisions of the Northern Circle, during the year, as compared with those of the year preceding:—

No.	Division.	Forest Area placed under protection against fire.		Acreage burned.		Percentage burned.		Expenditure incurred.		Remarks.
		1890-91.	1891-92.	1890-91.	1891-92.	1890-91.	1891-92.	1890-91.	1891-92.	
								Rs.	Rs.	
1	North Thána ..	449,465	436,398	53,559	8,613	11·9	1·9	751	2,364	The figures entered in column "Forest area placed under protection against fire" include the areas provisionally notified under Sections 4 and 28 of the Forest Act which are in charge of the Forest Department, but which are not included in Form No. 49.
2	South Thána ..	425,097	377,780	85,300	10,420	20·0	2·7	589	701	
3	East Khándesh ..	518,169	510,796	19,345	33,766	3·7	6·6	95	176	
4	West Khándesh ..	1,088,621	1,088,625	606,972	639,312	55·7	58·7	173	226	
5	Násik ..	763,333	818,499	10,187	11,321	1·3	1·3	102	128	
6	Ahmednagar ..	541,003	541,524	592	374	0·10	0·06	..	.	
7	Poona	476,090	476,645	2,154	3,805	0·45	0·79	63	11	
8	Sátára	440,867	438,684	4,062	993	0·92	0·22	..	..	
9	Sholápur	177,693	177,716	487	222	0·27	0·12	..	.	
10	Surat..	477,930	477,913	433,616	432,583	90·7	90·5	12	43	
11	Panch Mahális ..	212,240	200,109	9,014	10,133	4·2	5·06	1	2	
	Total ..	5,571,508	5,544,689	1,225,268	1,151,542	21·9	20·7	1,786	3,651	

127. In the two forest divisions of Thána greater attention was paid to fire conservancy; and owing to the energetic co-operation of the Collector, the mámlatdárs, police and other district officers, have all been enrolled in the cause of the suppression of forest fires. The round guards were directed to make an immediate report by means of a post-card to the Collector, direct, on the occurrence of fire within the forests of their rounds, so that the revenue and police officers might be at once warned to assist inquiry and make investigation into the origin of a fire, with a view to the detection and punishment of the offender. In the case of fires caused wilfully the main object is shikár, fire being used to remove the undergrowth and leaves, and thus facilitate the pursuit and slaughter of game. The preparation of ash manure in fields, adjoining forest boundaries, has led to the burning of much forest lands in different directions. The damage done by fire in a closed coupe is incalculable, and 15 of the South Thána division fires burnt "closed forest," traversing 755 acres out of a total of 11,112 acres: in one case the fire was caused by smoking rats out of holes, and two of the offenders were caught and punished with rigorous imprisonment for 20 days.

128. In the East Khándesh division fire conservancy has received specially careful attention, and had it not been for a fire, which occurred in the Sátpuda forests in the Yával range, about a fortnight before the close of the dry season,

through the carelessness of privilege-holders, and which raged for nine days, owing to a strong gale of wind blowing almost all the time and to the impossibility of extinguishing it—no fire trace will arrest a roaring fire in the Sátpudas in a gale of wind, burning vegetation such as the pith of reeds has been known, to be carried the better part of a mile in the air and to ignite the grass where it has eventually fallen,—whereby about 20,000 acres were burnt, the result of fire protection during the year in this division would have shown a marked improvement upon the preceding year. It is pleasing to be able to record that the forest villagers in this division turn out readily and cheerfully to fight a forest fire: 150 men were working for over a week against the Yával-Sátpuda forest fire.

129. The Collector of Khándesh notes: "It is to be regretted that the one great fire towards the close of the year in Yával should have raised the area burnt so high, for excluding that there was a very fair decrease in the total number of fires as compared with the preceding year."

130. In the West Khándesh division, notwithstanding all the preventive measures taken, forest fires have again been general and their range has been greater than ever. The chief cause of fire is the carelessness or indifference of villagers, who go into the forests to cut and take in the exercise of their conceded privileges; and the Collector, in forwarding the report, records that "privilege-holders are no doubt to blame for most of the fires in the Sátpudas."

131. One hundred and twenty-five forest fires were reported in the Násik division, of which 32 were in the Dindori range, 31 in Igatpuri, 15 in each of the Báglán and Násik ranges, 13 in Kalwan, 5 in Málegaon, 4 in Peint and the same number in the Nándgaon range, 2 in the Chandvad and Sinnar ranges, and one in the Yeola and Niphád ranges respectively: and in 50 cases the person by whose action the forest was fired was detected and punished. Some of the fires spread from the fire traces while the latter were being burnt.

132. Only 29 forest fires were recorded in the Ahmednagar division, and they traversed comparatively small areas, which aggregate 374 acres in all, or a little more than half a square mile: no fire traces are burnt in this district, and no expenditure is incurred upon fire conservancy, because forest fires are practically unknown.

133. No forest fires occurred in the Indápur, Sirur, Bhimthadi and Bárámati ranges of the Poona division, but 3,804 acres were burnt in the other seven ranges, the largest proportion being in the Junnar range, where 1,284 acres were fired. The Reserved Forests, the grass of which is made available to the Commissariat Department, suffered greatly from fire, 733 acres having been burnt; this is attributed to the contractor's servants purposely firing the forest in order to destroy evidence of having defrauded their masters by removing grass or permitting it to be grazed down.

134. The forests of the Sátára district are practically free from fires. Nine hundred and ninety-two acres only were burnt during the year by 36 different fires; in twenty-one of these cases the incendiary was discovered; ten of these cases were compounded under Section 67 of the Forest Act, as there was no evidence of intention or of criminal negligence; in six cases children caused the fires, and consequently nothing was done to them. Forest guards burnt 344 miles of fire traces and in three places the fire got beyond their control, and burnt small areas inside the forests which were being fire-traced: in five ranges there were no fires, in two other ranges less than one acre was burnt, and the largest extent of fires was in the Pátan range with 503 acres burnt.

135. In seven forest reserves of the Sholápur division fires appeared during the year, burning 222 acres, the total acreage of the forest division being 177,623; four ranges were free from fire; 5 acres only were burnt in Mádha, 84 in Karmála and 133 in Bársi.

136. The Surat division contains forests which are very much subjected to burning, for grass and under-growth are luxuriant under a heavy rainfall, and the forest tribes are wild, and resort to firing the forest in order to destroy cover for dangerous wild animals, to assist in the killing of game and vermin, and to facilitate the collection of mhowra flowers naturally shed by the trees in the

forests. In the Dángs a selected area of about 2,000 acres round a prominent land-mark, Bilia Dongar, where young teak of excellent growth is very plentiful, was again protected against fire successfully through the assistance and co-operation of the pátil and villagers of Zaria, Boripada and Gira. The pátils were rewarded with gifts of turbans, which were presented to them at the Darbár of the Dáng Rájas, and money payments were made to villagers for their services. In the Mandvi range great improvement is apparent in fire conservancy, as traces were burnt round all the reserves by the forest guards, and the forest villagers co-operated cheerfully in extinguishing fires, and in guarding against their visitation; except for one fire, which burnt 14 acres, the forests of the Bulsár, Párdi, Chikhli and Valod tálukas enjoyed complete immunity from fire.

137. Forest fires were too prevalent in the Panch Maháls division during the year as the following statement shows:—

Range.	Reserves fired.	Area of these Reserves.	Acreage burnt.
Godhra	24	23,680	5,498
Kálol	6	7,657	1,435
Hálol	5	8,397	1,895
Dohad	6	10,801	1,150
Jhálod	3	935	154
			10,132

10,132 acres in all were burnt, which is a slightly larger proportion than of the preceding year; all the reserves were fire-traced for protection.

5.—GRAZING AND FODDER GRASS.

138. The grass and grazing receipts of the Northern Circle have continued to increase during the year of the report as will be seen:—

Year.	Amount.	Year.	Amount.
	Rs.		Rs.
1878-79... ...	42,629	1885-86 ...	2,32,650
1879-80... ...	64,613	1886-87 ...	2,37,126
1880-81... ...	1,00,443	1887-88 ...	2,48,855
1881-82... ...	1,41,765	1888-89 ...	3,27,165
1882-83... ...	1,64,444	1889-90 ...	3,42,037
1883-84... ...	1,97,963	1890-91 ...	3,61,983
1884-85... ...	2,25,853	1891-92 ...	4,35,923

139. The following statement shows the revenue of the year of the different divisions under the several heads:—

No.	Division.	Valuable Kurans of Fodder Grass to be cut and removed.		Open to Grazing.					Auction Grazing.		Grass given to Commissariat Department.		Area closed to Grazing	Miscellaneous Grazing Revenue.	Total Grazing Revenue.
				Area.	Fee.		Free.								
		Area.	Revenue.		Cattle.	Revenue.	Cattle.	Value.	Area.	Revenue.	Area.	Money value.			
		Acres.	Rs.	Acres.		Rs.		Rs.	Acres.	Rs.	Acres.	Rs.	Acres.	Rs.	Rs.
1	North Thána ...	7,904	12,165	321,985	2,411	1,018	127,827	23,963	...	...	...	...	33,616	572	13,755
2	South Thána ...	1,089	200	258,237	9,476	4,430	122,327	41,000	...	...	...	...	23,413	308	4,938
3	East Khándesh ...	20,324	19,159	717,609	196,571	59,736	7,221	2,170	...	...	...	...	38,167	6,138	85,033
4	West Khándesh ...	20,823	7,079	788,088	432,385	91,450	1,310	300	...	...	...	...	223,472	3,334	1,01,863
5	Násik	33,635	16,588	574,935	201,813	49,206	91,192	24,841	...	...	...	...	209,879	1,802	67,596
6	Ahmednagar ...	6,307	764	341,782	132,473	29,069	13,337	2,371	4,532	3,022	5,393	8,629	175,649	6,435	39,290
7	Poona	48,676	31,286	231,668	63,773	12,401	72,221	18,806	41,841	2,131	19,496	34,500	122,334	1,555	47,373
8	Satára	46,648	27,709	255,248	112,198	14,314	137,073	33,915	...	...	...	...	136,776	2,760	44,783
9	Sholápur	29,018	12,021	48,401	30,986	8,325	10,958	2,866	...	...	...	...	40,443	3,344	23,690
10	Surat	...	...	24,011	2,689	739	1,000	250	...	...	...	...	7,079	257	996
11	Panch Maháls ...	16,983	1,355	175,700	17,597	5,231	47,000	13,200	494	19	...	...	1,642	1	6,606
	Total ...	231,462	1,28,326	3,737,664	1,202,372	2,75,919	631,466	1,63,687	46,867	5,172	24,889	43,129	11,012,970	26,506	4,35,923